

Message Text

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FOR: CU/WE ICS

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SUBJECT: VISIT OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS

1. DELEGATION OF 18 US AND CANADIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS VISITED UK FOR 10 DAY PROGRAM AT CENTRAL BUREAU FOR EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND EXCHANGES INVITATION, WITH CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT ENCOURAGEMENT FROM JORGE PONCE-PEREZ, INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY OF AAJCC AND STEPHEN ESKOW, PRESIDENT ROCKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE, NEW YORK.

2. AT CONCLUSION OF VISIT ESKOW CHAIRED SESSION AT WHICH HE ATTEMPTED TO WIN CONSENSUS ON (A) ESTABLISHMENT OF TRI-NATIONAL COMMITTEE (US-CANADA-UK), (B) RETURN VISIT OF UK DELEGATION LED BY JERRY FOWLER, MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION, AND (C) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENT, FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXCHANGE. HIS MOTIONS DID NOT CARRY. LESLIE KOLTAI, LOS ANGELES CITY COLLEGE, COUNTERED WITH PROPOSAL FOR RETURN VISIT BY POLICY-LEVEL DELEGATION TO VISIT 2 - 3 COMMUNITY COLLEGE CAMPUSES IN 10 - 14 DAY PERIOD, DELEGATION TO INCLUDE ACADEMIC EXPERTS IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES, FURTHER EDUCATION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION. CONSIDERED STUDENT EXCHANGE AS LOW PRIORITY.

3. IN LATER DISCUSSIONS WITH BRITISH EDUCATORS FROM SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS (THERE IS NO UK COUNTERPART TO COMMUNITY COLLEGES), UK PROBLEMS WERE IDENTIFIED AS / / ECONOMIC (INFLATION AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS HAVE
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DISCOURAGED EDUCATORS AND OFFICIALS FROM CONSIDERING ANY

NEW VENTURES), COURSE CONFLICT (AS IMPEDIMENT TO STUDENT EXCHANGE). AMERICANS COUNTERED THAT ALL PROBLEMS COULD BE SOLVED IF WOULD ONLY AGREE TO MOVE AHEAD. KOLTAI ADDED THAT HE BELIEVES UK COULD HELP US SIGNIFICANTLY BY IMPROVING QUALITY OF HUMANITIES COURSES.

4. POST COMMENTS: COMMUNITY COLLEGE STORY IS POSITIVE ACCOUNT OF AMERICAN INVENTIVENESS AND RESPONSE TO CHALLENGE OF URBAN PROBLEMS AND CONTAINS INTERESTING SUGGESTIONS FOR OTHER COUNTRIES FACED WITH SIMILAR URBAN SITUATIONS. IT THUS COMBINES MUTUALITY OF INTEREST WITH EXCELLENT INSIGHTS INTO US EDUCATIONAL AND POLITICAL IDEALS AND PRACTICES. UNFORTUNATELY BOTH ESKOW AND PEREZ-PONCE SEEM INTERESTED PRIMARILY IN STUDENT EXCHANGE "TO COUNTER PROVINCIALISM OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE CAMPUSES AND LEAD TO GREATER WORLD UNDERSTANDING". SUCH FORMULATIONS UNCONVINCING TO COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS SOME OF WHOM HAVE LARGE FOREIGN AND/OR MINORITY CONTINGENTS ON CAMPUSES, ALL OF WHOM HAVE OTHER PRIORITIES.

4. IF STATE AND/OR OE DECIDE FUND SIMILAR VENTURES THIS NATURE (AND OUR RECOMMENDATION IS POSITIVE) DELEGATION SHOULD INCLUDE OE OFFICIAL, ACADEMIC EXPERT, STATE OR MUNICIPAL OFFICIAL AND SELECTED COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS. BELIEVE KOLTAI WOULD AGREE TO THIS COMPOSITION. INCIDENTALLY, HE OFFERED HOST ANY VISITORS INTERESTED IN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND JUNIOR COLLEGE SYSTEM.

5. FOR USIA. ESKOW WAS NO-SHOW ON VOLSPKR APPOINTMENT, (HE WENT TO ISRAEL INSTEAD), BUT BELIEVE HIS ZEAL FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT EXCHANGE WOULD LIMIT MORE GENERAL PROGRAM USEFULNESS.

6. FOR STATE. ESKOW AND PEREZ-PONCE DISPLAYED IRRITATION AND CRITICIZED EMBASSY/STATE FOR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE AND INTEREST IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES. ASSURED BOTH WE WERE INTERESTED BUT COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT EXCHANGE NOT ON OUR LIST OF PRIORITIES. SUGGESTED BOTH OE AND STATE WOULD CONSIDER HIGH LEVEL EXCHANGE WITH SOME INTEREST. SUGGEST DISCUSS WITH MARIE MARTIN OE WHO ACCOMPANIED GROUP. IF INVITATION TO UK DELEGATION DEVELOPS, EMBASSY WISHES BE CONSULTED EARLY ON, SO THAT UNCLASSIFIED

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WE CAN WORK WITH CENTRAL BUREAU FOR EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND EXCHANGES.
ARMSTRONG

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